

Impact of Workforce Diversity on Employees' Performance in Nigeria Public Service: A Study of Rivers State Civil Service, 2010- 2017

Ihuah, Glory Chinanu

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences,
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of workforce diversity on employees' performance in Nigeria's public service using Rivers State civil service as a case study. Good service delivery cannot be achieved where the personnel manager does not value the diversity that exists in the organization; since it is the employees' similarities and differences put together that lead to organizational effectiveness. To achieve the aims of this study, the following research questions were raised: does workforce diversity exist in Rivers State Civil Service? What are the various forms of diversity that exist in Rivers state civil service? To what extent does diversity influence employees' job performance? Oral and previous works on the subject matter were used to answers questions. Methodologically, this study adopted the descriptive design and relied heavily on primary and secondary data, which guaranteed face and content validity while the analysis was anchored on Equity Theory. Conclusively, the study revealed that there can only be quality job performance and better service delivery in Rivers State Civil Service through a personnel manager who practices respect for human dignity, fairness and equity to avoid employees' resentment.

KEYWORDS: Diversity, workforce, public service and performance

How to cite this paper: Ihuah, Glory Chinanu "Impact of Workforce Diversity on Employees' Performance in Nigeria Public Service: A Study of Rivers State Civil Service, 2010-2017" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-5 | Issue-4, June 2021, pp.283-291, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd41222.pdf



IJTSRD41222

Copyright © 2021 by author(s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



INTRODUCTION

Organizations are concerned with obtaining the best possible staff for a better output. This is because human resources are the most essential asset of any organization, hence, the desire to have the best of this most valuable asset has resulted in institutions practicing a heterogeneous system which comprises of people of diverse attribute and of which the Nigeria public service is no exception (Abugu & Jerry 2018:3). This implies that the quality and quantity of the workforce are of determinants of the effectiveness of every organization. The emergence of most organizations as heterogeneous organizations has resulted in flexibility, innovation, quick decision making and encouragement of teamwork setting in organizations. This evolved as a result of most organizations in recent times recruiting individuals who possess some similarity and different characteristics from a pool of talents available. This tendency of an organization to employ and retain individuals with similar or different sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, ethnicity, age, gender and race is known as workforce diversity (Umemezia & Agbonifoh 2017:26). Hence, diversity among the workforce exists in any organization that is not homogenous. For Fine, John and Ryan (1990) in Onah (2015:115), diversity exists in an organization when the members differ from one another along one or more important dimensions. Ordinarily, there is hardly any organization that is homogenous. This implies that

individuals working in an organization such as public service share some similarities and differences which include feelings, likes and dislike but must work as a team to achieve the best outcome. The level at which an organization has workers with diverse attributes often determines the level of the organization's effectiveness.

For Abugu and Jerry (2018:36), workforce management is increasingly becoming a standard of human resource management in any organization, be it public or private. It is expected that the human resource manager must exhibit a high value for workforce diversity in order to reduce employees' threats and frustration while maximizing the organization's outcome. For Umemezia and Agbonifoh (2017:36), it is imperative for management to integrate workforce diversity strategy for organizational competitiveness and effectiveness. Management must of necessity devise a strategy that will bring out the best of all the physical and mental attributes of workers. Management showing concern for employees' social and psychological needs results in organizations having workers that perform optimally towards the attainment of the former's goals and objectives.

This paper aims at investigating the influence of workforce diversity on civil servants' performance in Rivers State Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Chieftaincy

Affairs. And identify the extent of diversity's existence in the ministries and recommend ways of managing the effect of the challenges of the said diversity.

Statement of the Problems

Personnel performance is the outcome emanating from effort exerted by employees in order to achieve organizational goals. Personnel performance could be rated low or high, depending on the management approach adopted in managing the similarities and differences that exist among the employees.

The Rivers State Civil Service is faced with several challenges among which are: lack of diversity awareness programmes, language barrier, cultural barrier, discrimination and professional etiquette. Naetor, Iheriohanma and Ukachukwu (2016:27) corroborated the above statement when they noted that, the Rivers State Civil Service has low productivity and high rate of personnel turnover. This has resulted in a lack of job satisfaction and motivation among the personnel in the Rivers State Civil Service.

There is the problem of poor attitude to work by the civil servants in Rivers State Ministry of Local Government and in the Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs. This was also observed by Nwokocha (2014) in Naetor, Iheriohanma and Ukachukwu (2016:17) when he observed that, Rivers State Civil service is turning to a breeding ground for conflict and misunderstanding leading to poor performance of employees.

The problem appears more acute in the two ministries (Local government and Chieftaincy Affairs) where the employees' are individuals from the diverse ethnic group, age, educational background etc which have resulted in bias, prejudice and discrimination by personnel managers attempting to favour those individuals who are of the same ethnic group with them; this has led to employees' threats and frustrations to most personnel. All these problems could be a result of improper management of workforce diversity that is practiced in the organization. This paper thus investigates the influence of workforce diversity on civil servants' performance in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does workforce diversity exist in Rivers state civil service?
2. What are the various workforce's diversity in existence in Rivers State Civil Service?
3. To what extent does workforce diversity influence personnel performance in Rivers State Civil Service?
4. What are the management strategies that could be adopted in managing the challenges of workforce diversity in Rivers State civil service?

Objectives of the Study

Based on the identified problems, the purpose of this study is to find out the influence of workforce diversity on civil servants' performance. Specifically, the objectives of the study are;

1. To find out whether workforce diversities actually exist among Rivers State civil services.
2. To identify the various workforce diversity in Rivers State civil service.
3. To determine the extent to which workforce diversity influences personnel performance in Rivers State Civil Service.

4. To determine the management strategies that could be adopted in managing all the challenges of diversity in Rivers State civil service.

Scope of the Study

This study investigated the influence of Workforce Diversity on civil servants' performance in Rivers State within the period 2010 – 2017. Only two Ministries in Rivers State civil service were covered, namely: Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs. The study is delimited to the following contents: Diversity, workforce diversity, and strategies.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Diversity

The concept of diversity is multi-dimensional. It revolves around all facets of life, individuals, society and institutions. Based on this, diversity means the variety, variegation and multiplicity of characteristics, visible and invisible which constitute a phenomenon in both the inanimate and animate world (Akinusi, Sonbi & Onyewunmi 2017:108). The concept "diversity" deals with similarities and differences that exist in a group. The concept of diversity in a society, according to Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013:30), indicates the consciousness of difference in cultural background, orientation, religious inclination, etc which exist among group of people within a social setting. It is a social axiom that, diversity exists among people living in a society. In the vein, Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem, and Abbas (2017:54) argued that, diversity is the presence of contrast among individuals from a unit of society. This means that, diversity includes differences and similarities in people's physical and mental characteristics.

In an organization, diversity is the extent to which an organization is heterogonous on characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, age, religion, functional background and organizational tenure (Abugu & Jerry 2018). Diversity in organization is the contrast among staff in the organization. This study adopts the organizational meaning of diversity, for this study. For the purpose of this study, by diversity we be referring to differences in human that enhance organizational output.

Concept of Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity refers to the acknowledging understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating differences among employees with respect to a whole continuum of differences including age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, economic status, sexual orientation, spiritual practices and public assistance status (Barak (2016), Cowllen(2013) and Forma (2014) in Zhuwao (2019:10)). This implies that workforce diversity is the similarities that exist among personnel in a work environment which include their individual personal and mental attributes that result in the attainment of organizational outcomes. For Ongori and Agolla (2007:72), workforce diversity is the coexistence of personnel from various socio-cultural backgrounds within an organization. This implies that, workforce diversity means the coming together of people with differences which include age, skills, religion and value to perform a task that results in effective goal achievement. This is in agreement with Ike and Eze (2013) in Akinnusi, Sonbi and Onyewunmi (2017:111) argument that, diversity in an organization promotes different styles and different ethics with greater variety of solutions to problems, individual talents and experiences

capitalized upon a diverse collection of skills and experiences leading to quality source and customer satisfaction and loyalty, which results in employees feeling comfortable to communicate every points of views, provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences, inspires all employees to perform to the best of their ability. In the same vein, Onah (2015:117) sees workforce diversity as difference such as in age, gender, ethnic affiliation, physical ability and disability, race and sexual orientation. That makes up the people in organizations. Thus, workforce diversity entails the existence of variation in behaviour and physical attributes of personnel in a workplace.

The effective management of workforce results in effective interaction among different personnel and enhances achievement of organizational objectives (Abugu & Jerry 2018:36). This implies that, proper management of differences that exist among employees leads to high performance of the employees. For McArthur (2010) in Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013:45) any organization that fails to successfully manage diversity will suffer economic and social consequences. Thus, the efficient management of workforce diversity results in organizations having highly motivated workers and high productivity. This means that the human resource manager must integrate the management strategy that incorporates the valuing of individuals despite their differences in order for them to participate actively towards the attainment of the organizations. This has resulted in management adopting management of diversity as a standard of human resource management in organization be it public or private (Abugu & Jerry (2018:36). Workforce diversity management in organization involves a holistic business oriented concept that signifies a big shift from traditional approach of complying with equal opportunity, legislature, policies and practices to recognizing and embracing individual differences as an important attribute toward organizational success (Sharma (2016) in Zhuwao (2017:11). This implies that management of workforce diversity in an organization includes valuing the individual differences and avoiding discrimination, bias and prejudice in order to achieve the organizational objectives. For Cummings and Worley (2014:5), effective management of workforce diversity includes the human resource executives creating an environment that empowers every personnel to perform at his /her maximum ability without being scheduled. This means that, the performance of an employee in a work place is determined by the manner in which the management handles the similarity and differences that exists among the employees in the work environment. This is in line with Sexena (2014) in Zhuwao (2017:2) statement that how workforce diversity is managed in organizations may be of positive or negative influence on performance of personnel. This is corroborated by a study by Ehimare (2012) who found that, effective management workforce diversity was positively related to employees' performance. The study revealed that, the effect of workforce diversity are determined by business strategies a firm pursues and how the human relations executive and employees respond and manage diversity, which include providing equal opportunities and treatment to all the personnel in the organization. For Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013:33) when workforce diversity is not properly managed, it results in unnecessary employees' turnover, a counter-productive and conflict prone work environment, while the effective

management of workforce leads to positive advantage to the organization.

Scholars like Williams and O'Reilly 1998, Pollar and Genzelez, 1994 and Abugu and Jerry (2018) have noted that, proper management of differences among employees' results in achievement of organizational outcome. In Abugu and Jerry (2018:39) positive effects of diversity were hypothesized and the study found that, more diverse work team are expected to possess information as team members may bring together differing view-points. This implies that workforce diversity brings competitive advantage to the organization. For Algathani (2013) in Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem and Abbas (2016:54), the practice of workforce diversity results in organizations being more inventive and creative to achieve already unreached markets and to attain and retain a competitive advantage over other organizations.

Some forms of workforce diversity

This study adopts the forms of workforce diversity as proposed by Onah (2015:119) which are as follows;

AGE: This focuses on the difference in age that exists among individuals in organization. This entails the effective management of individuals that are of different age towards the achievement of organizational goals. In a study by Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem and Ababas (2016:56) they found that there was no distinct relationship between age diversity and performance. For Williams and O'Reilly (iii) (1998) a heterogeneous age group of employees would be creative, dynamic and gainful than a homogeneous age.

GENDER: This entails the practice of heterogeneous system that is based on mixed gender group. Organizations are undergoing drastic changes in the area of recruiting of more or equal number female and male in organizations. This is as a result of the diversity awareness in the society today. Eagley and Wood (1991) opined that the group with mixed gender perform better than the same gender group. While Ukachukwu and Iheriohana (2016) found that adverse level of gender diversity can result in lesser quality because it places low performing people, less skilled workers in jobs for which they do not match well.

Ethnicity: This dimension of workforce diversity is prevalent in the Nigeria public sector. The Nigerian public sector comprises of people from diverse ethnic group arising from its merit system which has its root in the Federal Character principle for instance, Section 42 of the 1999 constitution states that no citizen of a particular community, ethnic group, social, religion or political opinion should be discriminated against. Pitts, Hacklin, Hawes and Melton (2010) argued that workforce from various educational background and different ethnicity creates opportunity for greater innovation and more creative solutions to the organizational problems.

Concept of Employee performance

Employee performance is the degree of effort expended by employees of organization in order to accomplish a set of task. Tinifiren (2011:15) sees personnel performance as the completion of a task by individuals as a set and is measured by the organization, pre-determined, acceptable standards. This implies that, the performance of workers in an organization is determined by factors such as human and material resources which include the management style practiced by the organization. Also, personnel in any organization are mostly influenced by the role perception

and the work environment. This is in agreement with Potter and Lawler's (1968) assumption that, an individual's behaviour is determined by a combination of factors in the individual and the environment. The practice of good workforce diversity by the human resources manager enhances employee and organization performance (Williams and O'Reilly (2004) in Maingi & Makor (2015:345), organizations that practice workforce diversity appropriately tend to have high personnel performance since it involves management creating a work climate in which the heterogeneous workforce put in their best without the organization favouring /disfavouring any particular segment of the workforce while, organizations that have poor practice of workforce diversity hardly have good production and motivated workers. For Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013:33) workforce diversity when not properly managed, results in unnecessary labour turnover, a counter-productive and conflict prone environment in organization. The efficiency and effectiveness of a heterogeneous organizational system depends largely on the human resource manager's ability in valuing diversity which includes recognizing other people's standard and value as valid as one own (Abugu & Jerry (2018:43). This implies that, the human resource executive must rule out all forms of discrimination among people in the organization for whatsoever reason. A heterogeneous workforce system can be detrimental to the organization when well managed. It results in withdrawal, high rate of absenteeism and conflict but when poorly managed result in ability to deal with diverse market, alternate decision, choices for better goal attainment, better human relation, preventing unnecessary labour turnover and building of good will of enterprise. This statement is corroborated by Williams and O'Reilly (2014) in Maingi and Makor (2015:345) when he stated that diversity in organization can be detrimental or beneficial for employee's performance. Management is expected to value the similarities and differences among personnel in organization in order to build a conducive work environment. This is in agreement with Shen, Chande, Nettob and Momgaa (2009:236) who stated that, management must cultivate the culture of creating an atmosphere of inclusion and making a commitment to valuing diversity. The practice of good workforce diversity inspires personnel to put in their best towards the attainment of organizational outcome; since it encourages people of diverse orientation to work in a team spirit as a result of good human relations thereby leading to managerial efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, Ogbo, Kifordu, Ukpere (2014) argue that, workforce diversity result in new innovations, knowledge sharing, knowledge enhancement, team coherence; when not properly adopted generates discrimination, conflict, prejudice and bias among the workforce. Thus workforce diversity when properly managed result in higher performance of personnel and job satisfaction since all the employees feel motivated and encouraged to work in friendliness and conducive work environment.

Scholars like Williams and O'Reilly (1998), Pollar and Genzelez (1994) and Abugu and Jerry (2018) have hypothesized the positive effect of diversity. For Abugu and Jerry (2018:39) more diverse work team are expected to possess information as team members may bring together differing view point. Thus, personnel in organization possess some similarities and differences which can enhance productivity or reduce the output of an organization. The

success of organization depend largely on the management making use of the best similarities and differences among employees in terms of age, orientation, values, attitude cognitive style. Organization that practices workforce must treat people equitably without any form of bias, prejudice and discrimination in order for the employees to work maximally to attain the organization desires.

Diversity management and Employees performance in Nigeria Public Service

The public service is the agency of government that is responsible for formulating and implementing of all government policies and programmes. For Gboyaga (1989:14) cited in Epelle (2009:54) public service covers the civil service, Judiciary, Police, Prison, Public enterprises, Local Government, Teaching staff and universities but excludes the Armed forces. This implies that public service comprises all personnel that worked under government excluding those in Armed forces.

Chapter iv of the Federal Republic of Nigeria constitution 1999, part 1(1) and part 11(c) provides for a public service at the federal level and at the State level of the Government and is made up of the following (1) the civil service which is referred to as the core service and is made up of line ministries and extra ministerial agencies. (2) The public bureaucracy which is made up of the enlarged public service and includes the following: (a). service of the state and National Assembly (b) the judiciary (c) the Armed forces (d). The police and other security agencies (e) paramilitary services (immigration, customs, prisons etc) (f) Parastatals and agencies including the social service, commercial oriented agencies, regulatory agencies, educational institutions, research institutions etc.

The Nigeria public service is composed of employees who share some similarities in terms of personal and mental attributes; from diverse family background, religion, educational qualification, abilities, age and experiences. This could be traceable to the practice of merit and the federal character of principle recruitment (Abugu & Jerry (2018:36). The recruitment of individuals with diverse characteristic is in line with the constitutional provision of section 42 of Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; which states that no citizen of any part of community, ethnic group, social group, sex, religion or political opinion should be discriminated against. This section of the constitution guarantees equal treatment of all employees in organization. This has resulted in public service being highly heterogeneous due to her practice of the merit principle of recruitment. Diversity in the public service as a strategy of increasing efficiency and competitive advantage in organization has become a tough challenges to management. This has made management of workforce diversity inevitable feature of occupational life in corporate world (Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem & Abbas (2016).

Hence, the human manager in Public Service must integrate strategies that will contribute to peaceful and friendly interaction of all personnel for a better performance and productivity. The management is expected to promote practices that will ensure the feeling by employees that they are highly valued regardless of their differences, rather integrating into the organization those employees who will otherwise feel rejected.

Copeland (1988) summarized the four ways of managing diversity as follows:

- Understanding: this implies that, management must understand that diversity exist in organization; so as to arrange for strategies that will efficiently manage the challenges of workforce diversity.
- Empathy: this include management showing certain degree of concern to personnel social and psychological needs, this include knowing the personnel weaknesses and trying to empower him\her with the necessary skills.
- Tolerance: this include accepting the individual for whom he is, this include valuing their abilities and disabilities without favouring /disfavouring a particular group.
- Effective communication: this involves management using words that do not send negative signal to the personnel which capable of causing resentment, threat and frustration among the staff.

Hence, management behavior that gives positive signal to employees; such as the practice of good human relation is capable of improving employees' performance.

More so, diversity could be effectively managed through the following practices in organizations such as the public service:

- Diversity awareness programmes and training: the practice of sensitization programmes such as a special programme fashioned out to socialize employees and the manager on how to interact with one another and members of the public, who are the beneficiaries of social services. This enhances organization's chances of making good use of the challenges of workforce diversity into opportunity pool. It includes the organization been so mindful of managing its diverse workforce for organizational efficiency and effectiveness through encouraging seminars and workshop for a better service delivery.
- Organizational policy: organizations must be willingness to integrate the practice of diversity and finding solutions to problems relating to diversity through responding and addressing the challenges within a reasonable time. This practice include, informing her workforce about the importance of workforce diversity to the organization's effectiveness. This could go a long way reducing the negative effect of diversity in organization.
- Organizational culture: organization that desires to have employees that are motivated to put in their best for organizational growth, the management must perceive diversity management as the life-wire of the organization; through her constant valuing of all personnel by showing them love and respect for human dignity.

The Rivers State Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs

The Rivers State Civil Service consists of 26 Ministries (Wikipedia, 2019). The Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs are among the ministries that constitute the 26 Ministries of Rivers State Civil Service. During Dr. Peter Odili's administration, the ministries were merged and addressed as Rivers State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs. The ministries were later separated in 2013, by the same government

(Wikipedia, 2019). This was mainly for administrative convenience. Each of the ministries is headed by a political leader (the commissioner) at the top while, a Permanent secretary who acts as the most senior administrative officer. Next to the Permanent Secretary are Directors, Deputy Directors in that order the Administrative officers act as the human resource managers in each of the ministries in Rivers State.

The Ministry of Local Government is responsible for driving down government policy and programmes to the grass root through the Local Government Chairmen. The Ministry is also charged with the responsibility of preparing monthly voucher of staff under the ministry. It is signatory to the release of each local government monthly allocation from the state account. Thus, the ministry is created to deal with matters concerning local government and local administration in Rivers State. The current commissioner is Samuel Eyiba (Wikipedia, 2019).

While, the Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs is conferred with the responsibility of appointing those persons who are qualified to handle chieftaincy titles both in rural and urban areas of the state. Its roles include promoting of recognized title holders and demoting of title holder who acted unconstitutionally (Wikipedia, 2019). This ministry can set up an adhoc committee, where there is land dispute between two or more Local governments. Its roles extend to hearing and settlement of issues relating to eligibility of traditional rulers.

This enormous duties conferred on both ministries have made its heterogeneous characteristics inevitable. The ministries are composed of people from diverse ethnic group, educational background, family background, age, gender, ability, religious group etc. The recruitment of people with similarities and difference has the advantage of enhancing staff performance. The role of the human resource manager in managing the various diversity that exist in both ministries, to a large extend determines the staff output. Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2016) found that, the major causes of irresponsive workers in organizations are the feeling of inequity resulting in staff resentment between the employees and the organization. In order to motivate the workers and achieve a better service delivery in Rivers Service the administrators are expected to treat all equals equally, because does not enhance staff motivation, it also increase their job satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

The Equity theory by J. Stacy Adams (1965) was adopted in this study. Equity theory focuses on employee perceptions as to how fairly they think they are treated compared to others. This theory assumes that, workers feeling that they are not valued or that management favours some team group while disfavouring others lead to employees' high rate of absenteeism and possibly quit. The major element of the theory has to do with comparing ones input and output with those in the organization and outside it. The elements are inputs, output (rewards) and comparison.

Input: this refers to the effort, skills, experience, intelligence, creativity seniority, status etc which an individual possess and is used to enhance the organization effectiveness.

Output: this refers to the reward or what the individual receives from the organization which could be in form of

recognition, appreciation, respect for human dignity and most importantly the management behavior etc.

Comparison: at this stage the employees compare the ratio of their own outcome to the input against the ratio of their input and output with those of others who could be working in or outside the organization.

According to Adams assumption, workers in organizations exert more effort towards goal attainment when they feel that they are valued and are treated with fairness and equity. This energizes the workers to put in their best potentials towards the organizational effectiveness.

The relevance of this theory to this study is that, typical public servants will only put in their best when they feel that, the management is being fair and practices equity. This is capable of improving their job satisfaction leading to high performance and productivity.

The management of public service is expected adopt management strategies that will promotes the valuing of the similarities and differences that exist among its workforce in other to avoid system collapse since the feeling of discrimination, bias, and prejudice result in staff resentment between the employee and organization.

➤ Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design. The purpose for the choice of this design is due to the fact that, it allows the collection of data for the purpose of discovering and interpreting conditions, attitudes and opinions (Oku & Idoniboye- Obu 2003:51).

The source/instrument for data collection: The study adopted primary and secondary method of data collection. The primary source of data collection was oral interview with the Directors and the Administrative senior staff in both ministries, while the secondary source of data collation includes the use of written documents on workforce diversity and personnel performance in organization. This includes text books, news paper publication, journals and Articles.

Analysis / Discussion of Findings

Extent of Work force diversity in Rivers State Civil Service

This study revealed that, the River State civil service comprises of personnel from diverse ethnic group, educational background and cultural affiliation, gender, religious inclination and family background. This indicates that, the Rivers State Civil service is complex and highly heterogeneous. This in agreement with Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013: 30), whose study found that, the Nigeria public service is highly heterogeneous. It is conscious of differences in cultural background, orientation, religious inclination etc.

According to the commissioner for Local government in Rivers State Samuel Eyiba, the heterogeneous nature of the Rivers State Civil Service is as a result of the practice of the merit principle of recruitment in civil service, the Federal Character principle and the adoption of Section 42 of the 1999 Nigeria constitution as amended. The study findings showed that, the civil service maintains that, the culture of recruiting personnel from any part of the country in order to achieve a better service delivery. This implies that, the Rivers State Civil Service is heterogeneous in nature.

Forms of workforce diversity that are in existence in Rivers State Civil Service

This study revealed that, the workforce diversity in Rivers state includes gender, age, ethnicity, educational background, religious affiliation, cultural affiliation and family background. This implies that, there is variation, variegation and multiplicity of characteristics among the staff of Rivers State civil service. This finding was in agreement with Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma (2013: 30), who opined that, diversity exist in Rivers state civil Service including in the areas of cultural affiliation, education background, sexual orientation, age and experiences. This implies that, the organization recruit its personnel without discrimination, bias and prejudice and that they share some similarities and differences which includes in their physical and mental attributes.

Influence of workforce diversity on personnel performance Rivers State Civil Service

This study revealed that, proper management of the difference among employees in Rivers state results in achievement of the organizational outcome. This finding is in agreement with Abugu and Jerry (2018 :39) whose study found that, more diverse work team are expected to possess information as team members may bring together differing view- points. This corroborates the findings in Algathani (2013) in Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem and Abbas (2016:54), that the practice of workforce diversity results in organizations being more inventive and creative to achieve already unreached markets and to attain and retain a competitive advantage over other organizations. This means that, diversity in organization influences staff performance positively. This is in line with Akinnusi, Sonbiand Onyewunmi (2017:111),who opined that, diversity in organization promotes different styles and different ethics with greater variety of solutions to problems, individual talents and experiences capitalized upon a diverse collection of skills and experiences leading to a quality source of skills and customer satisfaction and loyalty.

This study also revealed that, diversity influences personnel performance in Rivers State Civil Service as it offers large pool of ideas and experiences.

Management strategies that could be adopted in managing the challenges of workforce diversity in Rivers State Civil Service

This study revealed that, one strategy for managing the challenges of diversity is effective management of diversity through the human resource executive creating an environment that empowers every person to perform at his /her maximum ability without being scheduled. This is in line with the statement of the Commissioner for Chieftaincy and Community affairs, Sylavanus Nwankwo who stated that, in ministries in Rivers State Civil Service the most acceptable management strategy for reducing employees' resentment is through treating all equals equally, and valuing their similarities and differences to reduce tension and frustration.

The finding of this study is in agreement with Adams (1965) who opined that employees feeling of inequity results in tension. In the same vein, Sharma (2016) in Zhuwoa (2017:11) who opined that, effective management of workforce diversity includes valuing the individual's differences and avoiding discrimination, bias and prejudice in order to achieve the organizational objectives.

The study further revealed that, other ways of managing diversity in civil service includes, understanding the employees' social and psychological needs, empathy which involves knowing the weakness and empowering them, tolerance and the use of effective communication. This is in agreement with Copeland (1988), who opined that the four ways of managing diversity include understanding, empathy, tolerance and effective communication.

Conclusion

The study investigated the work force diversity in public service and its influence on personnel job performance in Rivers state civil service within the period of 2010-2017. The study found that different dimensions of workforce diversity exist, and each has influence on the job performance in such ministry.

In other words, the personnel manager is faced with problems of managing the diversity that exist in civil service which have influenced personnel performance negatively leading to poor achievement of good service delivery. Hence, our conclusion is that the personnel manager (personnel Directors) and the Government should integrate the practices of the study recommendations to enhance the management and staff job performance in the state.

Recommendations

- The Government should encourage the practice of management of diversity workforce as an organizational practice in all ministries, parastatals and departments of the civil service; since it is imperative for effective performance of the personnel and organization.
- The Government and Administrative officers should promote the practice of diversity awareness programmes; this will go a long way informing the public and personnel about the diversity that exist among individuals and how to interact with one another and that diversity serves competitive advantage to the employees and organization.
- The Government and Administrative officers should adopt organizational culture that, encourages the valuing of individual differences and training and retraining of staff to strengthen their weaknesses and potentials to work.
- Government should encourage the practice of fairness and equity by avoiding all forms of discrimination against employees; since this leads to personnel resentment and low performance.
- Government should encourage the establishment of more research institute and centres on diversity management. These institutions will make the impact of workforce diversity known to the public and private organization.
- Government should institute more organizational policies that will contribute meaningfully to the competitive advantage arising from workforce diversity.

Reference

- [1] Adler, N. J. (1986). Cultural Synergy: Managing the impact of cultural diversity, the 1986 annual: Developing Human Resource, 229-238.
- [2] Algahtani, A. (2013). Diversity in the corporate setting. *International Journal of Business and Barak M. S. M.* (2016). *Managing diversity towards a Globally*

Inclusive workplace, London, Bibliography Cengage Learning. *Change Management*, 2 (59) 343-364.

- [3] Child J. & Magrath, R. G. (2001). Organization unfettered: organizational form in information, Cumming, S. T. & Worley, C. G. (2014). *Organizations Development and changes*, Boston, U. S. A, different ethics. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(3): 144-150.
- [4] Edenor, P. A, & Aluko, Y. A. (2007). Diversity Management: Challenges and Opportunities in Multicultural Organizations, 6(6) 189-195.
- [5] Education Institution in South Africa: A study of the university of Venda, (Thesis Ehimare, O. A. & Ohaga-Oghene J. O. (2012). The Impact of workforce diversity on Epelle, A. (2009). *Issues in Nigeria Public Administration*, Port Harcourt, Rodi printing & publisher.
- [6] Federal Government of Nigeria (1999) the constitution Lagos: The Federal Government Printers. *Finance*, 3 (11): 76-85.
- [7] Fine, M. G, Johnson, F. L & Ryan M. S. (1990). Cultural Diversity in Work Place, *Public Management*, full, 309-317.
- [8] Foma, E. (2014). Impact of diversity: Review of *Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 3(1): 382-397.
- [9] <https://en.M.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rivers>.
- [10] Ike, N. M & Eze, U. T. (2013). Diversity in the concept of Management: Different Style and intensive economy: *Academy of management Journal*, 44(6): 1135-1148. *International Journal of Human Resources management*, 20: 235-251. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 2(2): 53-60.
- [11] Kenya: A case study of Kenya School of Government, *The Journal of Business and Loden, M. & Rosener J. B.* (1991). *Workforce America, Managing Employee diversity as a vital*
- [12] Maingi, J. & Makor, M. (2015). Effect of Workforce Diversity on Employee Performance in management context, *International Journal of economics, business and Management Management*, 3(1):121-136. of science, 1 (2):72-80.
- [13] Ogbo, A. I, Kiforu A. A & ukpere w. I. (2014). The Effect of Workforce Diversity on Ogbonna, S. & Jerry E. E. (2018). *Workforce Diversity Management in Nigeria Public Service: Onah F. O.* (2015). *Human Resources Management*, Enugu, University of Nigeria Press Limited.
- [14] Ongori, H. & Agola, J. E. (2007). Critical Review of Literature on Workplace Diversity, *Africa Journal OF Business Management*, 72-76.
- [15] Organization performance of Selected Firms in Nigeria, *Mediterranean Journal of Social Organization's effectiveness: a study of a Nigeria Bank*, Annals of the University of Organizational Performance in the Third World: Nigeria in focus in studies in sociology Organizations, (Masters Dissertation, University of South Africa).

- [16] Oyewunimi, A. E (2016). Emotional Intelligence and Diversity management competency: A Petrosani, Economics, 11(3):93-110.
- [17] Problems and Prospects, *Global Journal of Human Resources Management*, 6(1): 35-50.
- [18] Publication. Research in Organizational Behaviour, 6(20) 77140 *Research*, 1 (2):23-38. *Resource*, Illinois: Business one Inwin.
- [19] Resources Management: An International perspective and conceptual framework, *The Ryes S. & Rosen, B.* (1995) A field survey of Factors affecting the adoption and perceived Rzwam, M. khan, M. N, Nadeem, B & Abbas Q. (2016). The Impact of Workforce Diversity *Sciences*, 5(231-236.)
- [20] Sexena, A. (2014). Workforce Diversity: A key to improve Productivity, *Procedia Economics and Sharma, A.* (2016). Managing Diversity and Equality in Workplace: *Cogent Business and Shen, J. Chande, C. D'Netob B, Mongaa, M.* (2009). Managing Diversity through Human Shendner, R. (2013). *Performance Studies, an introduction*, Abington USA, Routledge, *Social sciences*, 4(14):123-145.
- [21] Sources of University training, personnel psychology summer, 247-270.
- [22] study of selected Public Healthcare Institutions in Southwest Nigeria, Unpublished Submitted to Department of Human Resource and labour Relations) South Africa.
- [23] Thesis of Ogun State, Nigeria: Department of Business Management, Covenant University.
- [24] Tinofrei, C. (2011) The unique Factors affecting employees performance in non- profit towards employees performance: Evidence from Banking Sector of Pakistan, *America*
- [25] Ukachukwu, C. C. & Iheriohanma E. B. J. (2013). The effect of Cultural diversity on employee productivity in Work Organizations in Port Harcourt Nigeria, *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, 3(1): 32- 47.
- [26] Umemezia, E. & Agbonfoh, A. (2017). Culturally diverse workforce and challenges in people's United Kingdom, Sage Publications.
- [27] Williams K. U. & O'Reinlly. (1988). Demography and diversity in Organizations: Forty years of Wokoma, C. U. & Iheriohanma E. B. J. (2010). Interaction between Globalization and Zhunwao, S. (2017). Workforce diversity and its effects on Employees Performance in Higher

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick (✓) your chosen response.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of respondents.

1. Which of the Ministries do you belong to? Local Government () Chieftaincy Affairs ()
2. Sex: male () Female ()
3. Qualification: B. Sc/B. Ed/B. Eng () Masters Degree () Ph. D ()
4. Grade level: 8-10 () 12-14 () 15 and above ()
5. Marital Status: Married () Single () Divorced ()

Please indicate the degree to which the following statement is considered correct by ticking () on the appropriate column, the option that best represents your opinion on the issue:

1. workforce diversity meansto me as ----- (A) the similarity that exist among employees in workplace (B) the dissimilarity that exist among workers (C) similarity and difference that exist among work group (D) differences in role perception
2. a. My organization recruit people from different ethnic group, age, gender and skills. [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why -----
3. a. Diversity in my organization, include educational background, religious belief and work experience. [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why-----
4. a. My organization only practice diversity in the area of race and physical attributes [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why -----
5. a. the practice of recruitment on merit principle contributes to diversity that exist in my organization. [A] Yes [B] No
b. if yes, why -----
6. a. Diversity in my organization, enhances effective interaction among diverse employees; thereby improving employees performance [A] Yes [B]No
b. if no, why -----
7. a. the creating of an atmosphere of inclusion and valuing diversity by management, increases employees motivation, job satisfaction and high productivity. [A] Yes [B] No
b If no, why -----
8. a. proper handling of workforce diversity reducesthe rate of unnecessary employee turnover and absenteeism [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why-----

9. a. The practice of diversity accelerates knowledge sharing, innovations and team coherence. [A] yes [B] No
b. If no, why -----
10. a. inappropriate management of diversity results in threat, frustration, discrimination, prejudice and bias leading to low performance of employees [A] Yes [B] No
b. if no, why-----
11. a. my organization encourage practice of awareness programmes as a strategy for managing diversity [A] Yes [B] No
b. If Yes, why-----
12. A. My organization adopts the practice of effective communication as a means of turning the challenges of diversity to opportunity pool. [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why-----
13. A. Good adversity practice entails treating all employees with fairness and equity. [A] Yes [B]No
b. If no, why-----
14. a. my organization adopts organizational policies that values diversity as a strategy for managing diversity [A] Yes [B] No
b. If no, why -----
15. a. My organization, integrates empathy as a strategy for managing diversity [A] Yes [B]No
b. If no, why-----

